

## **Music Survey Visits**

### **Generic grade descriptors and supplementary subject-specific guidance for inspectors on making judgements during visits to schools**

Subject feedback letters, following survey visits, normally contain separate judgements on:

- achievement
- quality of teaching
- quality of the curriculum
- effectiveness of leadership and management
- overall effectiveness in the subject.

In coming to these judgements, inspectors will use the relevant criteria and grade descriptors from the 2009 Section 5 evaluation schedule (up-dated in September 2010), as they can be applied to individual subjects. These descriptors are set out in the left-hand columns in the following pages. Alongside them (for achievement, teaching, the curriculum and leadership and management) are supplementary, subject-specific descriptors which provide additional guidance for music. These descriptors should be applied in a way which is appropriate to the age of pupils involved. Except where otherwise indicated, descriptors are intended to be used on a 'best fit' basis.

It is important to note that this guidance is intended only to inform the judgements made by specialist inspectors carrying out subject survey visits. It is not for use on Section 5 whole-school inspections.

## Achievement in Music

	Generic	Supplementary subject-specific
1	<p>Achievement is likely to be outstanding when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ attainment is above average or high and learning and progress are outstanding</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ attainment is high and learning and progress are good</li> </ul>	<p>Pupils of all abilities and interests make independent, informed and deeply musical choices by using a diverse and rapidly widening cultural repertoire to create original, imaginative and distinctive composing and performing work. Musical understanding is underpinned by high levels of aural perception and knowledge of music including high or rapidly developing levels of technical expertise, and a very good awareness and appreciation of different musical traditions, genres and styles. A significantly high proportion of pupils from all groups across the school (including the most vulnerable) benefits musically, personally and socially from regular and active involvement, as shown by their high levels of commitment to a diverse range of additional activities. The proportions of students following curriculum music examination courses in Key Stages 4 and 5 are likely to be above national averages.</p>
2	<p>Achievement is likely to be good when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ attainment is above average and learning and progress are good</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ attainment is average and learning and progress are good or outstanding.</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ attainment is low but there is convincing evidence that outstanding learning and progress are helping pupils' attainment to improve strongly. On rare occasions learning and progress may be good, but outstanding for some groups of pupils and improving overall.</li> </ul>	<p>Pupils enjoy their musical experiences and make good progress in their musical understanding as a result of high expectations for all. Singing is confident and controlled, instrumental techniques are accurate and secure, and pupils are able to create their own musical ideas. Attainment is good in relation to learners' capability and starting points, particularly with regard to their previous musical interests and experiences. Music is a popular subject and pupils from all groups participate actively in curriculum lessons and extra-curricular activities. Pupils benefit individually and as a whole from music, showing for example increased self-confidence and self-esteem. Pupils show a readiness to engage positively with different musical traditions and styles.</p>
3	<p>Achievement is likely to be satisfactory when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ attainment is average, above average or high and learning and progress are satisfactory</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ attainment is low but improving strongly and learning and progress are good. Or, there is convincing evidence that learning and progress are satisfactory but improving securely and quickly.</li> </ul>	<p>Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, usually enjoy completing tasks set by their teachers in class, but often without depth of aural response and understanding, the confidence to think for themselves or taking creative risks. Occasionally pupils' work shows originality but more often it is dependent on a limited repertoire and understanding of music traditions and styles. Progress is generally made through repetition, particularly in singing or instrumental work, rather than through exploring, controlling and improving musical concepts or specific technical skills. The proportion of pupils participating in additional tuition or in extra-curricular activities is satisfactory, given their prior musical experiences and the context of the school; all groups are represented, although not all may be represented equally.</p>
4	<p>Achievement is likely to be inadequate if either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ learning and progress are inadequate</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ attainment is low and shows little sign of improvement, and learning and progress are no better than satisfactory with little or no evidence of improvement.</li> </ul>	<p>Pupils rarely show the ability to work independently or take the initiative in their work. Melodic and rhythmic skills are underdeveloped and pupils are unable to create their own musical ideas. Music is not a popular subject and does little to develop broader outcomes such as pupils' self-confidence. Few pupils take part in extra-curricular music activities. In secondary schools, pupils either have no opportunity to respond to different musical styles or, when given this opportunity, they respond negatively with shallow comments.</p>

## Quality of teaching in Music

1	<p>Teaching in the subject is at least good and much is outstanding, with the result that the pupils are making exceptional progress. It is highly effective in inspiring pupils and ensuring that they learn extremely well. Excellent subject knowledge is applied consistently to challenge and inspire pupils. Resources, including new technology, make a marked contribution to the quality of learning, as does the precisely targeted support provided by other adults. Teachers and other adults are acutely aware of their pupils' capabilities and of their prior learning and understanding, and plan very effectively to build on these. Marking and dialogue between teachers, other adults and pupils are consistently of a very high quality. Pupils understand in detail how to improve their work and are consistently supported in doing so. Teachers systematically and effectively check pupils' understanding throughout lessons, anticipating where they may need to intervene and doing so with striking impact on the quality of learning.</p>	<p>Pupils of all abilities and interests make outstanding progress in developing their musicality because teaching focuses in a relentless and coordinated way on their aural development, improving the musical quality and depth of their musical responses, and high level or rapidly improving instrumental/vocal techniques (including good attention to posture). Music, as the target language, is used to model and explain - confidently, expertly, and musically. Words and notations are used to support musical learning, rather than drive it. Teachers refer to the work of professional composers and performers and draw knowledgeably on a wide and diverse range of cultural traditions and resources, including the use of new technologies. Teachers give pupils the confidence to challenge, ask questions, show initiative and take risks in order to create original, imaginative and distinctive work of high musical quality. While lessons are always planned and structured thoroughly to promote good musical learning, teachers respond very positively to pupils' creative, and sometimes unexpected, musical responses and build on these to promote outstanding learning. Assessment is outstanding because it is focussed on the quality and depth of pupils' musical understanding. Audio and video recordings are used extensively to appraise pupils' work, identify how their musical responses might be improved further, and consistently realise these improvements.</p>
2	<p>Teaching in the subject is consistently effective in ensuring that pupils are motivated and engaged. The great majority of teaching is securing good progress and learning. Teachers generally have strong subject knowledge which enthuses and challenges most pupils and contributes to their good progress. Good and imaginative use is made of resources, including new technology to enhance learning. Other adults' support is well focused and makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning. As a result of good assessment procedures, teachers and other adults plan well to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils are provided with detailed feedback, both orally and through marking. They know how well they have done and can discuss what they need to do to sustain good progress. Teachers listen to, observe and question groups of pupils during lessons in order to reshape tasks and explanations to improve learning.</p>	<p>Pupils make good progress because there is a constant emphasis on aural development, and practical music making helps pupils learn how to respond musically. Performing is at the heart of all musical activity and learners are given every opportunity to experiment with instruments and voices and to experience making music with others. Working relationships are positive so that pupils are given the confidence to perform, be creative and learn from mistakes. Learning objectives are clear and simple, focussing on the musical skills, knowledge, and understanding to be learnt by pupils rather than the activity to be completed. In secondary schools, students are helped to make connections between their work and the work of others (including established composers and performers) so their work is informed by an increasing range of musical traditions, genres and styles. Work is made relevant so that tasks are put into context and related to 'real' practice. In lessons, assessment is focussed firmly on the development of pupils' musical understanding. Frequent recordings of pupils' work are used to develop pupils' self-assessment and their listening skills.</p>
3	<p>Teaching in the subject may be good in some respects and there are no endemic inadequacies. Pupils show interest in their work and are making progress that is broadly in line with their capabilities. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure. Adequate use is made of a range of resources, including new technology, to support learning. Support provided by other adults is effectively deployed. Teaching ensures that pupils are generally engaged by their work and little time is wasted. Regular and accurate assessment informs planning, which generally meets the needs of all groups of pupils. Pupils are informed about their progress and how to improve through marking and dialogue with adults. Teachers monitor pupils' work during lessons, pick up general misconceptions and adjust their plans accordingly to support learning.</p>	<p>Teachers maintain pupils' general interest in music by ensuring that all lessons include some practical activity, although often there is also an equal focus on written work, including the use of notation, too early in the learning process. Use is made of listening, composing and performing activities but these are not always linked together to help pupils make better than satisfactory progress. Pupils' responses are assessed informally during the lesson; work is marked and records kept, although the focus tends to be about increasing musical technical difficulty, rather than the quality of the musical response and understanding shown. There may be over-frequent grading of individual musical activities, rather than wider and deeper consideration of pupils' overall musical understanding.</p>

4	<p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Expectations in the subject are inappropriate. Too many lessons are barely satisfactory or are inadequate and teaching fails to promote the pupils' learning, progress or enjoyment.</li> <li>■ Assessment in the subject takes too little account of the pupils' prior learning or their understanding of tasks and is not used effectively to help them improve.</li> </ul>	<p>Teachers take little or no account of prior learning, for example 'starting again' in the secondary school. There is a lack of aural development and too much reliance on non-musical activities (such as worksheets). Teachers' subject expertise is limited, and insufficient attention is given to the development of specific musical skills, knowledge and understanding. Repertoire is poorly chosen and little attention given to improving posture and instrumental/vocal techniques. Pupils are not given the confidence needed to be able to perform, be creative and learn from their mistakes. Objectives are unclear so that different tasks are often unrelated. There is a total lack of differentiation – all pupils are set the same task without any additional challenge or support provided. In secondary schools, learners are not helped to make connections and work is often unrelated to 'real' practice'. There is no systematic recording of attainment and/or pupils' work. Arbitrary grades are given to work, which are unrelated to national grade/level criteria or are unrelated to expectations for musical understanding.</p>
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## The curriculum in Music

1	<p>The curriculum in the subject provides memorable experiences and rich opportunities for high-quality learning and wider personal development. The subject curriculum may be at the forefront of successful, innovative design. A curriculum with overall breadth and balance provides pupils with their full entitlement and is customised to meet the changing needs of individuals and groups. The subject's contribution to relevant cross-curricular themes including, as appropriate, literacy, numeracy and ICT, is mainly outstanding. As a result, all groups of pupils benefit from a highly coherent and relevant curriculum which promotes outstanding outcomes.</p>	<p>Imaginative and stimulating courses are planned in detail and are well-resourced, promoting pupils' outstanding musical development across phases and key stages. Repertoire is matched carefully to pupils' previous experiences and to their needs, interests, abilities, and ages. Excellent, sustained partnerships with professional musicians and community groups complement consistently outstanding classroom provision to cover all curriculum requirements in good depth and breadth, at all key stages. This includes the skilful and imaginative use of ICT by teachers and pupils to integrate composing, performing, listening and appraising in a way that helps pupils of all abilities and interests to make good progress in developing their musical understanding. There is a wide and diverse range of high-quality extra-curricular activities that meets the needs and interests of all groups of pupils, as shown by their excellent participation rates and great enjoyment in memorable, high-quality musical experiences. Music permeates many aspects of school life.</p>
2	<p>The curriculum in the subject provides well-organised, imaginative and effective opportunities for learning and a broad range of experiences which contribute well to the pupils' development. The curriculum is adjusted effectively to meet the needs of most groups and a range of pupils with highly specific needs. The subject makes a good contribution to relevant cross-curricular themes including, as appropriate, literacy, numeracy and ICT. Enrichment opportunities in the subject are varied, have a high take-up and are much enjoyed.</p>	<p>The curriculum is broad, balanced and well informed by current initiatives in the subject. The curriculum provides a clear sense of progression - steps of learning are identified so that teachers and pupils are clear what is expected and understand how to improve the quality of work. Tasks are sequenced well to consolidate and extend learning. ICT is used effectively and relevantly in all forms of musical activity. Extra-curricular activities extend pupils' musical experiences. Music plays an important role in the school community; there are good opportunities for school groups to perform in the wider community and with community music groups. There are appropriate links and references to the wider world of music, including professional performers and the wider music industries, and learners who aspire to careers in music are given appropriate preparation and support.</p>
3	<p>The curriculum in the subject is adequately matched to pupils' needs, interests and aspirations and provides adequate preparation for the next stage of their lives, whatever their starting points. Provision for potentially vulnerable pupils is satisfactory. The subject's contribution to cross-curricular themes including, as appropriate, literacy, numeracy and ICT, is at least satisfactory.</p>	<p>Sufficient time and planning is given to the curriculum to ensure that all statutory requirements are met and that schemes of work broadly reflect all course requirements. Over each key stage, the curriculum provides a satisfactory depth and breadth of coverage of musical traditions, genres and styles. Partnerships contribute to satisfactory and improving outcomes in music for pupils which the school alone could not provide. These may include appropriate use of outside agencies, professional musicians and community groups. There is a reasonable range of regular, additional opportunities including instrumental and vocal tuition and musical ensembles.</p>
4	<p>The curriculum has significant shortcomings in meeting the needs of pupils, or particular groups of pupils, and makes insufficient contribution to their learning, enjoyment or development.</p>	<p>There is an over-reliance on externally published schemes which are insufficiently adapted and/or poorly used to meet the requirements of all learners. Teachers' planning does not demonstrate an understanding of progression in musical learning, and tasks are not sequenced sufficiently to ensure consolidation of learning. Resources are unsatisfactory and do not include provision for ICT. The curriculum does not meet statutory requirements – often in respect to the breadth of experiences required. There are few extra-curricular activities and participation is poor because those provided do not meet the needs and interests of all pupils. There are very few opportunities for learners to sing, play instruments together and to perform to others.</p>

## Effectiveness of leadership and management in Music

1	<p>Subject and senior leaders and managers are conspicuously successful in establishing a strong sense of purpose which involves work towards meeting or sustaining ambitious targets in the subject for all pupils. Morale is very high and belief in success runs through all staff involved with the subject. Rigorous and extensive monitoring, searching analysis and self-challenge lead to exceptionally well-focused plans for the subject. Actions taken are implemented with precision and managed thoroughly. As a result, the quality of teaching in the subject is at least good and leaders and managers at all levels are taking highly effective steps to drive up the quality of teaching still further. Consequently, achievement in the subject for all pupils is at least good.</p>	<p>Subject leaders have a high level of musical expertise and understanding of key issues in musical education. Senior managers and subject leaders share a strong belief in, and vision for, the importance of music for all. Subject reviews demonstrate an excellent understanding of the effectiveness of all areas of musical learning and activity, and a strong programme of planning and professional development leads to further improvement. Subject leadership inspires confidence and commitment from pupils and colleagues. However, the success of music is not solely dependent on the subject knowledge and expertise of the subject leader; the skills and experience of other teachers, adults and more advanced pupils, are utilised very well to enhance provision. Subject leaders and senior managers build sustained, high quality partnerships with outside organisations and individuals that bring long-term benefits to all groups of pupils. High-quality music is at the heart of school life, both in the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities; furthermore, the school plays a significant role in helping to develop and exemplify good and innovative practice on a local and national level.</p>
2	<p>Subject and senior leaders and managers consistently communicate high expectations to staff about securing improvement in the subject. They galvanise the enthusiasm of staff and channel their efforts to good effect. Leaders and managers routinely make good use of a range of rigorous monitoring activities relating to teaching, other provision and outcomes. They have an accurate picture and understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Planning is founded on robust evidence and good-quality data. It is tackling key areas of weakness, including those in teaching, systematically and building on areas of strength. As a result, teaching is at least satisfactory and improving. Target-setting is realistic and challenging. Consequently, achievement in the subject is generally good, or there is substantial evidence that it is improving strongly.</p>	<p>Leadership of music is well informed by current developments in the subject, and there is a clear vision for the development of the music provision in the school. There is a shared common purpose amongst those teaching the subject, with good opportunities to share practice and access subject training. The music provision includes all pupils in a good range of musical activities. Partnerships are strong, benefiting all pupils. Instrumental/vocal programmes and lessons are an integral part of music provision. Pupils are encouraged to attend regional and community musical activities. There is a good understanding of the school's musical strengths and weaknesses through effective self-evaluation, which takes into account the needs and interests of all pupils. Resources are well used, including any extended services, to improve outcomes and to secure good value for money. There is good awareness of national music initiatives.</p>
3	<p>Subject and senior leaders and managers are motivated to seek further improvement and are effective in focusing efforts on priorities in the subject. They monitor accurately the progress of all pupils and the quality of teaching and learning. Self evaluation is broadly accurate. Target-setting in the subject is based on accurate assessment information but is only adequately challenging. Suitable plans are in place aimed at improving areas of weakness in the subject and effective steps are being taken to secure high-quality teaching. Expectations are sufficiently high to bring about outcomes which are broadly satisfactory and improving or, if lower, there is substantial evidence that they are improving strongly.</p>	<p>Through self-evaluation and a sound understanding of how pupils learn musically, the subject leader and senior managers ensure that all curriculum requirements are met, that teaching places appropriate emphasis on musical activity and development, and that all groups of pupils are able to participate and make satisfactory progress in their musical development. Additional support from outside agencies and other partnerships is managed adequately to provide additional opportunities and challenge. Teachers have a broad awareness of current issues and developments in music education and have benefited from involvement in local training courses, including opportunities to network with colleagues in other schools.</p>
4	<p> <span>■</span> Subject and senior leaders and managers are not taking effective steps to embed their ambition for the subject.  or  <span>■</span> Target-setting in the subject is not used effectively to raise expectations and improve outcomes.  or  <span>■</span> Subject and senior leaders and managers do not drive and secure improvement.  or  <span>■</span> Subject and senior leaders and managers are not taking effective steps to secure satisfactory and better teaching. </p>	<p>There is no clear vision of music for all. Music is not inclusive because the school has not considered the involvement and progress of different groups. Consequently significant groups do not participate in, succeed in, or enjoy music. There may be an over-reliance on extra-curricular activities as a 'shop window' without comparable attention given to music in the curriculum. Partnerships are underdeveloped. Learners have limited opportunities to attend regional and community musical activities, to work with different practising musicians or to experience live music. Provision is not mapped or monitored effectively. The quality of self-evaluation is unsatisfactory and priorities for improvement are not clearly identified. There is very little awareness of national initiatives.</p>

## Overall effectiveness in Music

<b>Outstanding (1)</b>	Overall effectiveness in the subject is likely to be outstanding when: Achievement in the subject is outstanding, or achievement is good and outstanding leadership and management underpin the capacity for sustained improvement in the subject. At least one, of teaching or the curriculum in the subject, is outstanding, and neither is less than good.
<b>Good (2)</b>	Overall effectiveness in the subject is likely to be good when: Achievement in the subject is good, and good leadership and management provide secure evidence of capacity for sustained improvement in the subject. In exceptional circumstances, leadership and management may be satisfactory. At least one, of teaching or the curriculum in the subject, is good, and neither is less than satisfactory.
<b>Satisfactory (3)</b>	Overall effectiveness in the subject is likely to be satisfactory when: Achievement in the subject is at least satisfactory, and satisfactory leadership and management ensure adequate capacity for improvement in the subject. Teaching and the curriculum in the subject are at least satisfactory.
<b>Inadequate (4)</b>	Overall effectiveness in the subject is likely to be inadequate if any of the following are inadequate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Achievement in the subject</li><li>■ Capacity for improvement, as evidenced by inadequate leadership and management of the subject</li><li>■ Teaching or the curriculum in the subject</li></ul>